

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SAM-01 EA-06 SAJ-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /082 W

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R 311200Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6450

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0446

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BC

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KHAMA ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT KHAMA MADE A MAJOR SPEECH AT BOTSWANA  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY ANNUAL CONFERENCE MARCH 29 IN WHICH HE SAID  
NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA HAD BEEN CREATED  
BY NEW POLICES OF PORTUGAL AND SUCCESS OF LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.  
LUSAKA TALKS REPRESENTED EFFORT TAKE ADVANTAGE NEW DEVELOPMENTS  
AND DID NOT REPRESENT CAPITULATION TO ENEMIES OF AFRICA AS  
CONTENDED IN SOME QUARTERS. BOTSWANA SAW NOTHING WRONG  
WITH DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH AFRICA ON RHODESIA AS LONG AS  
NATIONALIST INVOLVED. IF LUSAKA TALKS ON RHODESIA FAILED,  
ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE, LEADERS COULD NOT  
BE EXPECTED DISAIDE NATIONALISTS FROM USE OF FORCE. PRESIDENT  
MENTIONED RECENT DECISION ESTABLISH RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC  
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RELATIONS WITH PRC AND SOVIET UNION WHICH IN OUR VIEW

REPRESENTS EFFORT ENHANCE BOTSWANA'S NON-ALIGNED CREDIBILITY AS WELL AS PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA ND RHODESIA. IT SEEMS TO US BOTSWANA LIKELY TO MOVE CLOSER POSITION OAU AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES DEALING WITH SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES AND SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE HOPEFUL U.S. AS MAJOR POWER WILL BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN WORKING FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE IN REGION. END SUMMARY.

1. A THE INVITATION OF PRESIDENT KHAMA, AMBASSADOR AND ZANBIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER ATTENDED THE OPENING SESSION OF THE 14TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE RULING BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY WHICH WAS HELD AT MAHALAPYE ON MARCH 29. ALSO PRESENT WERE VICE PRESIDENT, CABINET MEMBERS, SENIOR DISTRICT OFFICIALS AND SEVERAL HUNDRED PARTY DELEGATES. PRESIDENT KHAMA IN ONE HOUR AND HALF SPEECH COVERED (A) IMPACT OF CHANGES IN PORTUGUESE AFRICA, (B) LUSAKA TALKS TO RESOLVE RHODESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE, (C) CRITICISM AND SUSPICION ABOUT DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH AFRICA, (D) CREDIBILITY OF BOTSWANA'S NON-ALIGNED POLICY, (E) EMERGENCE OF BLACK RACISM AND IMPLIED OPPOSITION THREAT TO TOPPLE GOVERNMENT BY FORCE (REPORTED SEPTTEL).

#### PORTUGUESE AFRICA

2. PRESIDENTNCHAMA CALLED ATTENTION TO POLITICAL CHANGES IN LISBON AND NOTED PORTUGAL'S DECISION GRANT INDEPENDENCE TO GUINEA BISSAU, MOZANBIQUE, ANGOLA DN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE. HE SAID PORTUGAL WOULD NOT HAVE HAD A CHANGE OF HEART WITHOUT "THE GALLANTRY AND TENACITY OF PURPOSE OF LIBERATION FORCES IN THESE TERRITORIES"; NEITHER WOULD THERE BE SOUL-SEARCHING ON PART OF BOTSWANA'S MINORITY-RULED NEIGHBORS. COMMENT: THIS IS BECOMING COMMON LINE AND PROBABLY REFLECTS PRESIDENT'S BELIEF AND REGRET THAT FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA TO DATE HAVE BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT BY FORCE RATHER THAN BY PEACEFUL METHODS. HE WOULD THEREFOREHOPE THAT U.S. AND OTHER MAJOR POWERS WOULD IMPROVE THEIR POLICIES AND BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN WORKING FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

#### LUSAKA TALKS

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3. PRESIDENT KHAMA DISCUSSED HIS ROLE IN LUSAKA TALKS ON RHODESIA. HE SAID THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA CALLED FOR RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS OF REGION. PRESIDENT STATED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT MINORITY REGIMES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA HAVE BEEN FORCED TO RECONSIDER THEIR POLICIES BECAUSE OF (A) IMPRESSIVE VICTORIES BY LIBERATION FORCES IN PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES, (B) CONCERTED EFFORTS OF ZIMBABWEAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND (C) ENLIGHTENED

POLICIES OF THE NEW PORTUGAL. PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR THAT HE AND THE PRESIDENTS OF TANZANIA, ZAMBIA AND FRELIMO DECIDED TO ENGAGE IN LUSAKA TALKS NOT BECAUSE THE "LIBERATION WARS ARE AN EXERCISE IN FUTILITY"; HE SAID THE CHANGING POLITICAL SCENE HAD CREATED NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR PEACE AND THE FOUR LEADERS WANTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS PROMISING DEVELOPMENT. THE PRESIDENT QUOTED AT LENGTH FROM THE LUSAKA MANIFESTO ON OBJECTIVE OF LIBERATION AND SAID AFRICAN LEADERS "HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PREPARED TO TALK PEACE" AND THEY HOPED SMITH AND VORSTER WANTED PEACE. THE PRESIDENT SAID "THE ALTERNATIVE TO PEACE IS CONFRONTATION AND IF THEY PREFER CONFRONTATION TO PEACEFUL CHANGE, AFRICA WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GIVE ITS FULL SUPPORT TO THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE". IF THE RHODESIAN TALKS FAIL, THE PRESIDENT SAID, THE ALTERNATIVE WILL BE A RE-ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE; HE STRESSED THAT THE FOUR LEADERS COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO DISSUADE THE NATIONALISTS FROM USE OF FORCE IN THE ABSENCE OF MEANINGFUL PROGRESS TOWARD THE END OF THE PRESENT RHODESIAN SITUATION.

#### OAU ROLE AND DIALOGUE

4. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS REFLECTED HIS SENSITIVITY TO CRITICISM ABOUT THE FOUR PRESIDENTS' EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE RHODESIAN DISPUTE OUTSIDE THE OAU FRAMEWORK. HE SAID THE LEADERS HAD NOT VIOLATED THE OAU CHARTER; THEY HAD NOT SOLD OUT THE ZIMBABWEANS. THE FOUR PRESIDENTS WERE NOT OBLIVIOUS TO THE COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OAU MEMBERS; EMISSARIES HAD BEEN DISPATCHED TO BRIEF HEADS OF STATE BECAUSE THEY WANTED THEIR INTENTIONS UNDERSTOOD AND WANTED TO AVOID BEING ACCUSED OF "HOBNOBBING WITH THE ENEMIES OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE".

5. DESPITE BRIEFINGS, THE PRESIDENT SAID SUSPICIONS PERSISTED THAT THE INITIATION OF THE LUSAKA TALKS BY THE FOUR LEADERS AMOUNTED TO CAPITULATION TO THE ENEMIES OF AFRICA. THE  
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PRESIDENT EXPLAINED THE VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KIND OF TALKS PRIME MINISTER VORSTER HAD ALWAYS CALLED FOR AND THOSE INITIATED IN LUSAKA LAST DECEMBER. HE SAID PRIME MINISTER VORSTER IN 1971 CALLED FOR DIALOGUE OVER THE HEADS OF THE BLACK PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE WHEREAS THE LUSAKA TALKS INVOLVED THE NATIONALISTS THEMSELVES WHO WERE TAKING THE LEAD WITH THE FOUR PRESIDENTS PLAYING AN ADVISORY ROLE. HE STRESSED THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF "HOBNOBBING WITH THE ENEMIES OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE", "CAPITULATING TO THE ENEMY" OR "ABANDONING THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF COLONIALISM AND RACIAL TYRANNY..." COMMENT: BY IMPLICATION THE PRESIDENT CRITICIZED THE VORSTER-TOLBERT TYPE DIALOGUE.

NON-ALIGNMENT

6. THE PRESIDENT RESTATED BOTSWANA'S FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS AND BOTSWANA'S GENERAL FOREIGN RELATIONS. HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE DECISION TO ESTABLISH RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PRC AND SOVIET UNION AND SAID THESE DECISIONS WERE IN LINE WITH BOTSWANA'S POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. HE STATED THAT BOTSWANA COULD NOT MAINTAIN ITS CREDIBILITY AS A NON-ALIGNED COUNTRY IF ITS EXTERNAL RELATIONS WERE ONE-SIDED. HE STRESSED THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST STATES DID NOT IN ANY WAY SIGNIFY A CHANGE IN BOTSWANA'S POLICY VIS-A-VIS WESTERN POWERS. THE PRESIDENT AT THIS POINT AGAIN COMMENTED ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES, STATING THAT BOTSWANA WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK FOR THE ELIMINATION OF INJUSTICE AND RACIAL TYRANNY. IT WOULD SEARCH FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT "HUMAN PATIENCE IS NOT INEXHAUSTIBLE AND THE FURY THAT DERIVES FROM FRUSTRATED EXPECTATIONS AND DELAYED JUSTICE KNOWS NO LIMIT."

COMMENT:

7. THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS PARTLY REFLECT AN EFFORT TO ENHANCE HIS CREDIBILITY AS A SPOKESMAN FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN NATIONALISTS IN OAU AND OTHER NON-ALIGNED FORA. IT IS ALSO INDICATIVE OF INCREASING FRUSTRATION ABOUT THE SLOW PROGRESS AND DIFFICULTIES IN ACHIEVING HUMAN DIGNITY, EQUALITY AND SELF-CONFIDENTIAL

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DETERMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. BOTSWANA IS LIKELY TO MOVE EVEN CLOSER TO THE OAU AND NON-ALIGNED POSTURE IN DEALING WITH SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES FOR LACK OF AN ALTERNATIVE. DECISION ESTABLISH RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PRC AND SOVIETS PROBABLY REPRESENTS MOVE TO PRESSURE SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA AS WELL AS EFFORT ENHANCE BOTSWANA'S NON-ALIGNED CREDIBILITY. SENIOR OFFICIALS IN ALL BLS STATES ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE U.S. AS A MAJOR POWER WOULD BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN WORKING FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND IN PARTICULAR PERSUADE SMITH TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING AND VORSTER TO REMOVE HIS POLICEMEN FROM RHODESIA.

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, SPEECHES, POLITICAL SITUATION  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 13 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <13 JUN 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESIDENT KHAMA ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY  
**TAGS:** PFOR, BC, SF, (KHAMA, SERETSE M)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006